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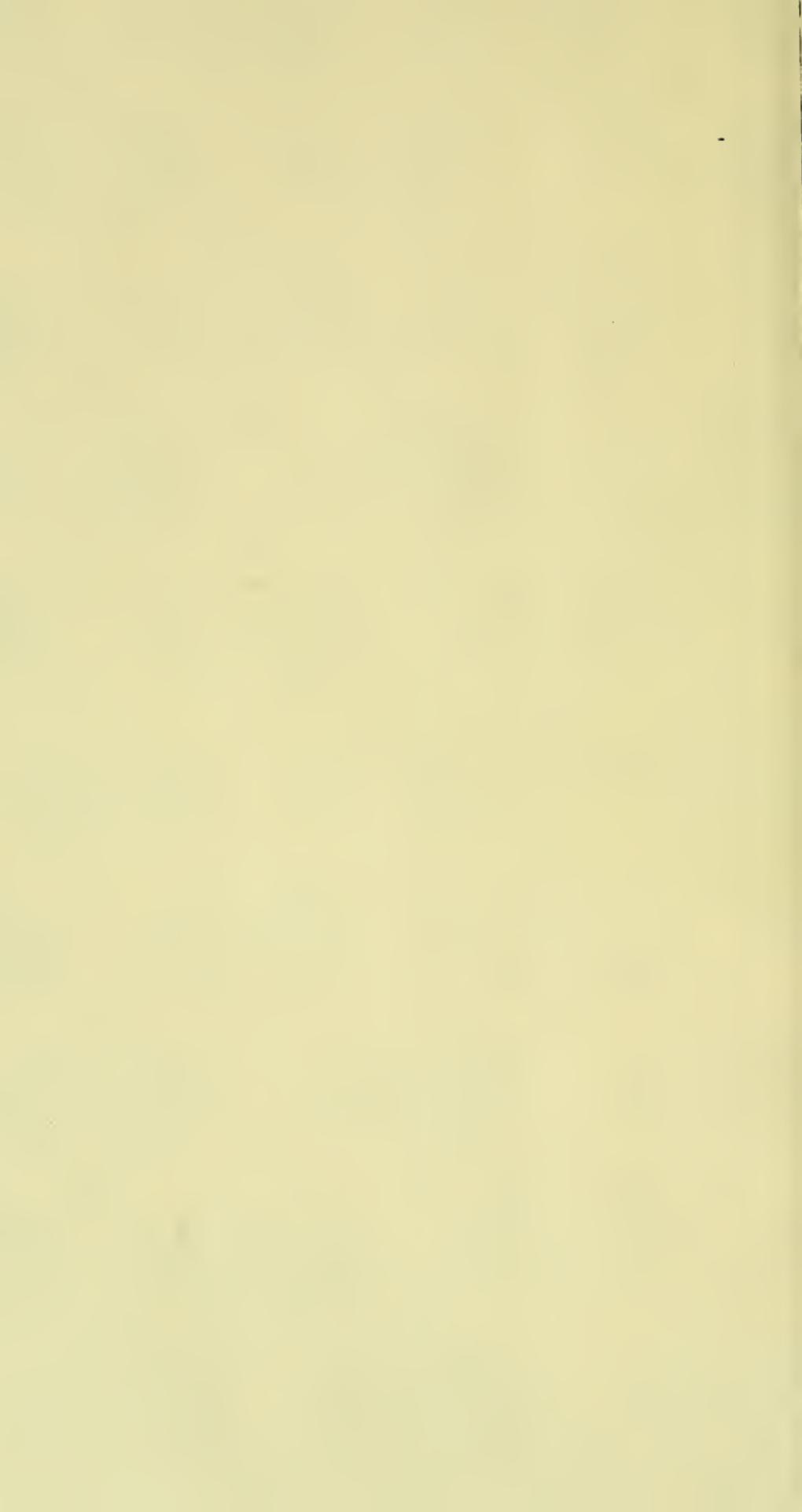
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# INDEPENDENCE PROGRAMME

FOR

JULY 4, 1865.



How shall we Celebrate the coming "Fourth"?



*John C. Frémont*

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A new Independence Programme is here presented to the public, with the hope that it will be carried out in *spirit* by every community in the United States. That it may be enlarged or abridged, altered and amended to suit the circumstanees of every society, and secure the greatest benefit to the present and future defenders of our country, is the wish of the author.

MARCH, 1865.



## INDEPENDENCE PROGRAMME.

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We all know that thousands of dollars are annually expended for fire-arms and fire-works, that our children and youth may show their patriotism by firing pistols, throwing rockets, and getting up more or less brilliant displays, according to the taste or means of each family. That the practice is always attended with some danger to person and property, I think all will admit; certainly all who have been through the hospitals in our large cities, the week after the ‘Fourth,’ or who have had their homes destroyed by fire-works in the hands of those who knew not how to manage them with safety. Let those who have any doubts upon the subject, read the following paragraph taken from “The Boston Daily Evening Transcript,” some time in the Summer of 1864 :

“It is estimated that five thousand persons were injured throughout the country last ‘Fourth,’ from fire-arms, explosions, &c. Two millions of dollars worth of property was destroyed.” And each year, there are recorded the *deaths* of several persons from the same cause. A costly sacrifice! Is it annually demanded of us by gratitude, or by the most intelligent and devoted patriotism? I cannot but think that

our young people could this year, at least, spend their time and money in a more patriotic and more agreeable manner than they have heretofore done, on our National Anniversary.

On the morning of the ‘Fourth,’ let Halls, or any other suitable places, be opened in this city, and in all loyal cities and towns, that our children and youth of both sexes may bring the sum that they usually spend for fire-works, for the benefit of our soldiers in the field, or for the benefit of our sick, wounded, or disabled seamen and soldiers, (without regard to nation or color,) or for that of the orphans of those who have fallen in defense of our country, just as each state, city, parish, or child may decide. Let it be a freewill offering to our brave men, and the cause of freedom, and our children will remember the day as the most interesting anniversary of their young lives—for children have generous hearts, and the sacrifice would be only so much treasured happiness to them, yielding ever increasing interest, while it would bring many comforts and rich blessings to those who have not hesitated at any sacrifice for us.

Let music, flags and flowers, and a few appropriate words, add to the interest of the hour. I doubt not that *any* of our poets would be *most* happy to write words expressive of the generous emotions that will animate the breast of each youthful contributor. Let such words be set to some of our old, familiar, spirit-stirring airs, in which *all* could join, and they would be sung with such spirit that older voices could not keep silent. Would not organists, singers, and musicians generally, lend their aid on such an occasion ?

Let the wealthy and childless bestow something upon the penniless ones in our midst, that they too may join the happy throng in their grateful offerings. And let the Five Points' missionary also, and all in similar positions, open places for the young of their flocks to bring their offerings, however small they may be, to the good cause. It will do them good; make them better, happier and more patriotic citizens.

I know that our children have gladly borne their part in all that has been done for the defenders of our country; but this would be emphatically the *children's work*—a good and happiness purchased by the sacrifice of an accustomed pleasure.

Such festivals as are here proposed would not be so many children's fairs, exactly, but equivalent in their financial results, and more than equivalent in their effect upon our heroes in the field. Surely it would quicken the pulse and cheer the hearts of our brave men, wherever they might be, and however suffering, to hear of such a simultaneous gathering of our loyal youth, from the Atlantic to the Pacific, to lay their offerings on the shrine of Gratitude and Liberty—to thank the Most High, and invoke His blessing—and to sing, not only of the patriotism, wisdom, heroic fortitude and courage of those who won our freedom, but to sing also of the wisdom, patriotism, and equally noble deeds and lofty daring of those who are defending our more than Royal Heritage. For those who have fallen, our martyred heroes, we can do no more; they have gone to their reward, and the blessing of unborn millions will rest upon their names. How shall we thank Him who gave us so many earnest, faithful men, ready to

sacrifice everything but honor and truth to preserve the integrity of their country? How rich we were, we did not know until the priceless jewels in each family were counted and laid on our country's altar.

With deepest gratitude and tenderest sympathy may we and our children ever remember those who must now look above for their consecrated treasures, which were given to secure all the inestimable blessings and privileges we now enjoy and hope to transmit to our children.

Our country is still rich, in all that constitutes the true wealth and glory of a nation; rich in the extent of her *free* territory, and in the noble, free and beneficent institutions established in almost every State; but richer far in the intelligence, strong hands, strong, active minds, true, loyal hearts, and right principles of her people.

Our cause is a just and holy one, and God has given us just, wise, patriotic rulers, and brave, loyal men to defend it; and I trust that the time is not far distant, when our Government will be firmly established on broad, deep, righteous foundations, in which *not one* crumbling or misshapen stone shall be found to endanger the mighty structure which rises above them, and which will be dedicated, I hope, to the Almighty Ruler of nations, the God of Truth, Justice, Freedom and Humanity.

May the blood-written lessons which we have been compelled to learn, sink deep into our hearts and into the hearts of our children, and be so perpetuated, that none but those with clean hands, broad, clear minds, and large, *true* hearts will ever be called to minister in

our reconstructed and reconsecrated Temple—under whose broad shadow may the oppressed of all nations ever find rest.

I am well aware of the numerous objections that will be made to the new Programme. Some will consider it an unpatriotic innovation upon a time-honored custom, and an infringement upon the pleasures of their children. That it is an innovation, I admit ; but it seems to me that it only calls for a higher expression of patriotism than can be given by fire-works of any kind. The morning celebration need not interfere, in the least, with other festive gatherings of the day ; and if our children respond to this call, as I hope they will, I have no fear that their voices will ring less joyously through the day on account of their morning sacrifice. I doubt whether the youthful patriots of Massachusetts, who last year gave, some a part, and others *all* their Fourth of July money, for fresh vegetables to sustain the strength of our soldiers in the field, would exchange the pleasure derived from that purchase, for a whole pyrotechnic establishment.

Others say, “ News of great victories about that time would banish all thoughts of such an expression of joy and gratitude as you propose.” And yet it would be *more loudly* called for than ever ; for just and holy as is our cause, we have no reason to expect bloodless victories now. And our soldiers will need our aid and care for a long time to come, should hostilities cease to-morrow.

The less hopeful will say, ‘ Should we meet with reverses, the rebels will think such celebrations a sign of our weakness and discouragement.’ But I do not

see what comfort, or cause for triumph, the enemy could find in the fact that vast armies of youthful patriots were on this day mustering to do honor to our brave men, and to cheer them on, and to offer such service to their country as they can now render, and thus preparing to fill the places of those now in the field, when their time shall come.

Victory may not always "perch upon our banners," but I hope that we are wise enough to look at things as they are, and brave enough to look even defeat in the face, and calmly set about repairing the evil as best we can. I have no fear that we shall lose a battle from any want of valor in our soldiers, and if they lose the day, they will need our aid and sympathy more than a victorious army would, for according to the testimony of those who have been in our hospitals, a defeated soldier sinks under his wounds sooner than the victorious one.

Others say—"The programme is very good," "It is just what we need at this time," "No doubt it will be received with joy by the mothers of our boys." But others add, "We cannot expect to bring Young America up to that point!" "She will not submit to dictation with regard to her pleasures on Independence Day." I am compelled to admit that Young America is often self-willed, and that she is sometimes sadly wanting in reverence for age, and respect for authority; but she is still generous and patriotic, and will, I believe, stand upon any height to which early training and public opinion will lead her.

But the objection which will have most weight, will be urged by those who believe that the words of the

venerated John Adams were addressed to the children as well as to the City-fathers. Now, I yield to none in reverence for the name of Adams. "Adams and Liberty," was the first patriotic song that I learned in the home of my childhood, and every year of my life gives me a higher appreciation of what we owe to the great and good men, the devoted, fearless, incorruptible patriots who bore that honored name. For myself, I must say, that I do not think Mr. Adams ever anticipated fire-works in the hands of almost every child, as the result of his counsel with regard to the manner in which coming generations should celebrate the Birth-Day of our nation. I think that he alluded to our public demonstrations of joy, *only*.

But whether his words were addressed to the fathers or the children, has not the time come when it will be neither unwise nor unpatriotic to depart a little from the letter of his instructions, that we may the better carry out the spirit and teaching of his life. His life gave *his* and the true definition of patriotism, love for one's country and zeal in her service.

Only let our children understand that the new programme is *unquestionably* as patriotic as the old one, and that it will enable them to render truer service to their country in this her hour of need, and it will be carried out most enthusiastically.

None of us, I think, can keep our National Festival this year in *just* the spirit and manner that we *once* did ; the chastened heart of the nation forbids it ; the mighty interests and perils of the hour forbid it. \* But they are leading us to a higher plane, where, I trust, we shall have such broad, clear views of our past,

*words, which have now a  
deeper meaning than  
ever before.*

present and future, that, though deeply and justly humbled, every heart will be filled with high resolve, with holy hope and unwavering trust, and with deepest gratitude to Him who has sent forth our mighty hosts of noble spirits to labor, pray, and battle for the Right —which, sooner or later, will triumph gloriously.

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N. B.—As it is desirable that the new Programme should be circulated as widely and as rapidly as possible, every Editor in the United States is here respectfully and earnestly solicited to give a place in his columns to such a portion of it as he shall deem necessary to secure the object proposed. In no other way can all be prepared to take part in this celebration. And it is earnestly desired that *all who approve* should at once advocate the measure with voice and pen.







